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## CRIME AND TATTOOING—BORSTAL INSTITUTION

of criminals come from the classes of the population which practice tattooing, and therefore it is natural that many criminals are found tattooed. The quality of the tattooing may, however, be of significance from the standpoint of criminality. In itself it is merely a manifestation of a coarse, primitive, but still normal make-up, but certain forms of tattooing and the subjects depicted by the process may reveal an abnormal make-up in that individual. Mr. A. T. Sinclair has recently made a valuable contribution to the subject of tattooing in two articles, one entitled "Tattooing—Oriental and Gypsy," in the *American Anthropologist*, for July-September, 1908, Vol. 10, page 361, and the other, "Tattooing of the North American Indians," in the same journal for July-September, 1909, Vol. 11, page 362. These two articles make abundantly clear the general and widespread extent of the practice. He says: "There is an immense territory filled with hundreds of millions of people, most, if not nearly all, of whom are tattooed, viz., India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Syria, Egypt; and the custom reaches back to the highest antiquity. From this district it is traced, step by step, in contiguous countries, or those separated only by seas, over farther India, all over the South Seas, Australia, China, Japan, Northeastern Asia, across Bering Strait, the Aleutian Islands, all over North and South America, the Antilles and all over Africa and Europe." Moreover, the practice, according to Mr. Sinclair, is growing in the civilized world, and is certainly not decreasing in the Orient. In America, particularly, it appears to be increasing.

Mr. Sinclair seems to incline to the view that in origin tattooing may be of religious significance, and quotes a number of references to it from both the old and new testaments, as well as citing its use in connection with other religions. He feels, however, that we are not warranted in drawing general conclusions as to its significance until more extensive investigations have been made. It would seem, therefore, that Lombroso's view of tattooing as a primitive characteristic, indicative of atavism when found among civilized peoples, was a hasty and not well-founded generalization, and that as to its essential significance we must withhold judgment until further study and investigation have afforded adequate material for theorizing.

E. L.

**Borstal (England) in 1910.**—A very interesting report of the English reformatory institutions for boys and girls who have offended against the law, between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one, has been recently published by the Borstal Association, 15 Buckingham Street, Strand, London. There are three Borstal institutions: Borstal, Lincoln and Aylesbury. The system has grown out of experiments conducted by the Prison Commissioners (the governing body of all English prisons) since 1902, at Borstal and Lincoln. In 1908 the Borstal system was adopted as part of the penal system of the country, the reformatory purposes of the institutions being specified in language reminding one strongly of the laws establishing Elmira Reformatory. The methods are similar in many respects to those long established in American reformatory institutions. A special grade, corresponding in general to the first grade of our reformatories, gives special privileges, among them the chance to work outside the institution walls, unguarded. "The fact that an attempt to escape is hardly ever made is a testimony to the training and the discretion exercised in selection for the special grade." The Borstal boy has drill, gymnasium, trade instruction, schooling and an amount of recreation (games, newspapers, magazines, football, cricket) not generally found in American reformatories.

## PRISON REFORM IN CALIFORNIA.

The Borstal institutions depend for their success on the spirit, sympathy and ability of the officers and staff. "It is a remarkable thing that not a single complaint has been made by any inmate to the Visiting Committee during the year of 1909." On release, the Borstal Association (formed by Sir Evelyn Ruggles-Brise) receives the boys, under a system closely resembling the developed parole systems of the American reformatories. The license under which the boy is released provides that during the unexpired portion of his sentence (which sentence cannot be longer than three years), and for six months longer, the released boy must satisfy the association that he is avoiding bad company and leading a sober and industrious life.

The summary of a year's results are interesting. Of 236 boys and five girls received by the association on their release from Borstal institutions, 191 were provided with clothes, and often with an outfit of tools, were placed at work, and had their wages supplemented when necessary; 28 were provided with clothes and arrangements made with former employers and relatives for employment; 6 could not be helped; 11 refused help; 5 girls from Aylesbury were placed in homes. Of the 241, 16 were known to be doing well in May, 1910; 7 were lost sight of; 20 were unsatisfactory; 30 had been reconvicted.

The statistics have a familiar ring, for the total of unsatisfactory reports within a relatively short time of release seems to be about the American proportion for the same period—about 25 per cent. Recently the association has established a shipping home, many of the boys showing the desire to go to sea. Other boys are being placed out on farms. Careful records are being kept of the dealings of the association with every boy. The association has recently undertaken the care of girls released from Borstal institutions.

The appendix of the report gives the Prevention of Crimes Act, 1908. The entire report is but eighteen pages long, and is worth sending for. O. F. L.

**Prison Reform in California.**—The State Board of Prison Directors of California complains that, although 10 per cent of the prisoners of the state are out on parole, and that nine-tenths of these are "making good," the number in prison is still too large, on account of the present lack of uniformity of punishment imposed by the superior judges of the state. One member of the board is reported as saying:

"While one judge will sentence a man for two or three years on the first offense, another will give a man for the same crime eight or ten years. The trouble is that a large number of judges are 'high livers,' and when their respective livers give them a little trouble the prisoner brought before them gets the worst of it. Why, there is one judge in Fresno County who made the statement a little over two years ago that the next man arrested for robbery, and brought before him, would get fifty years in jail, and the judge kept his word, for he sent a young fellow of 16 years of age to Folsom in December, 1906, sentencing him to fifty years' imprisonment for robbery on first offense. That judge's name is H. Z. Austin. Now, if this young fellow serves his term, he will come out an old man, and all we can possibly do is to give him such training as prison facilities permit and perhaps parole him later."

"I am smarting under the gross injustice that is done to first offenders by judges of our state. If judges would give more moderate sentences to first offenders, instead of sentencing such men excessively and then write to this Board recommending parole and clemency for one reason or the other, or